

Conservation Commission Minutes
Tuesday, September 9, 2014
Town Hall Meeting Room, Old Town Rd.
5:30pm

Present: Members: Chair Ned Phillips, Jr., Vice Chair Fred Leeder, David Roosa, Donald Littlefield, Les Slate, and Marea Mott. Absent: John Hopf. Also present was Administrative Assistant Teresa Chmiel for the recording of the minutes and Town Councilman Christopher Warfel.

Call to Order

Chair Mr. Phillips, Jr., called the regular meeting of the Conservation Commission to order at 5:33pm.

Dune Restoration:

- **Receipt of an email dated August 18, 2014 from Chris Warfel re: Wire/wood fencing problems.**
- **Receipt of an email dated August 14, 2014 from Chris Warfel re: Fencing 8-2014.**
- **Receipt of an email dated July 15, 2014 from Chris Warfel re: Sand Fencing Update.**
- **Develop a budget item for sand fencing.**

The Commission received emails and photograph attachments from Chris Warfel dated July 15, August 14, and 18, 2014 addressing snow fencing safety issues; as well as the progress of the sand fencing.

Christopher Warfel, Town Councilman was present. Mr. Warfel addressed the complaints from the highway/road crew regarding the snow fencing safety and liability issues of metal debris and broken wooden slats. Additionally, Mr. Warfel addressed the testing of the biodegradable sand fencing in the area of Coast Guard Road beach, receiving permission from Mike Shea, Highway Supervisor to install netting and approval from CRMC for the material. He spoke about the approval from CRMC for installation of sand fencing in the same areas the snow fencing had been granted.

Mr. Phillips, Jr. explained to Mr. Warfel that the snow fencing requires maintenance and money. Mr. Phillips, Jr. acknowledged that 9 rolls of fencing remain. He asked how much sand built up over the year and half along the sand fencing, Mr. Warfel replied approximately a foot. Mr. Phillips, Jr. further discussed that the snow fencing is the industry standard of preference. Mr. Phillips, Jr. stated he did not support this type of material; however he asked for a scientific study of the sand fencing. Mr. Littlefield commented that the change from steel to a wooden post is superior. Mr. Slate asked if other communities were using the biodegradable material.

Mr. Warfel stated that he is not asking the Commission to install the sand fencing, but to quote a price for material for budget purposes; he stated he would install. It was agreed by the Commission that the sand fencing will be installed in the area where the road crew has installed post and rope in front of the dunes.

Request for an Advisory opinion to the Town Council re: Change to New Shoreham's General Ordinances 11-71 "Protected wildlife area designated."

Mr. Littlefield shared background information on duck hunting, as well as his concerns. Mr. Littlefield discussed the bird migration stop over for the east coast. Last fall, he spoke to the Audubon Society and they reported that approximately 400 Ruddy ducks were found in the Sachem Pond; he stated this area should be protected. Mr. Littlefield informed the Commission hunters will start shooting ½ hour before sunrise. Mr. Littlefield discussed the tourism industry and the support of the Rhode Island Audubon Society traveling to the island the first weekend in October.

Mr. Leeder stated that an emergency opened the area to deer hunting, however this is not an emergency situation for duck hunting. Mr. Leeder stated the land is a place of refuge and rest for the migratory birds.

Mr. Phillips, Jr. discussed the 2009 revision of the ordinance to allow deer hunting. He identified abutting properties owned by Fish & Wildlife closing their land to waterfowl hunting.

Mr. Leeder made a motion, seconded by Mr. Slate to send an Unfavorable Advisory to the Town Council to open Plat 1, Lot 16 for waterfowl hunting based on the following findings of fact:

- This is not an emergency situation, to open the property for hunting of waterfowl.
- This area is a place of refuge for rest and safety for migratory birds.
- This area is the bird migration stop-over for the east coast.
- The Audubon Society reported approximately 400 Ruddy Ducks were found in Sachem Pond in the fall of 2013; the Conservation Commission requested that this area should be protected.
- This is a protected fly-over area for migratory birds.
- A gun discharge scatters the bird flock; as well as creating noise pollution.
- Allowing the hunting of waterfowl disrupts the support of Island tourism.

6 Ayes (Phillips, Jr., Leeder, Roosa, Littlefield, Slate, and Mott) 0 Nays
1 Absent (Hopf)

Correspondence:

Receipt of an email dated August 12, 2014 from Chris Warfel re: Green Products.

The Commission is in receipt of an email dated August 12, 2014 from Chris Warfel regarding the evaluations of “green products”. The Commission is in consensus of the endorsement of the purchase and use of “green products”.

Receipt of a memorandum dated August 19, 2014 from Nancy Dodge re: Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook.

Mr. Phillips, Jr. discussed keeping a copy of the Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook in the building department; he did not see a benefit for each member to have their own copy.

Act/Finalize Town of New Shoreham Tree Ordinance.

Mr. Phillips, Jr. provided a Rhode Island list of sustainable plants and trees to be included with the Tree Ordinance. The completed Town of New Shoreham Tree Ordinance will be submitted to the Town Council for consideration.

Approval of Minutes of June 10, 2014.

Mr. Littlefield made a motion, seconded by Mr. Leeder, to approve the minutes of June 10, 2014 with minor corrections.

6 Ayes (Phillips, Jr., Leeder, Roosa, Littlefield, Slate, and Mott) 0 Nays
1 Absent (Hopf)

Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10pm in a motion by Mr. Littlefield and seconded by Mr. Slate.

6 Ayes (Phillips, Jr., Leeder, Roosa, Littlefield, Slate, and Mott) 0 Nays
1 Absent (Hopf)

Respectfully submitted

Teressa L. Chmiel

Administrative Assistant Building and Land Use

Minutes approved: October 14, 2014